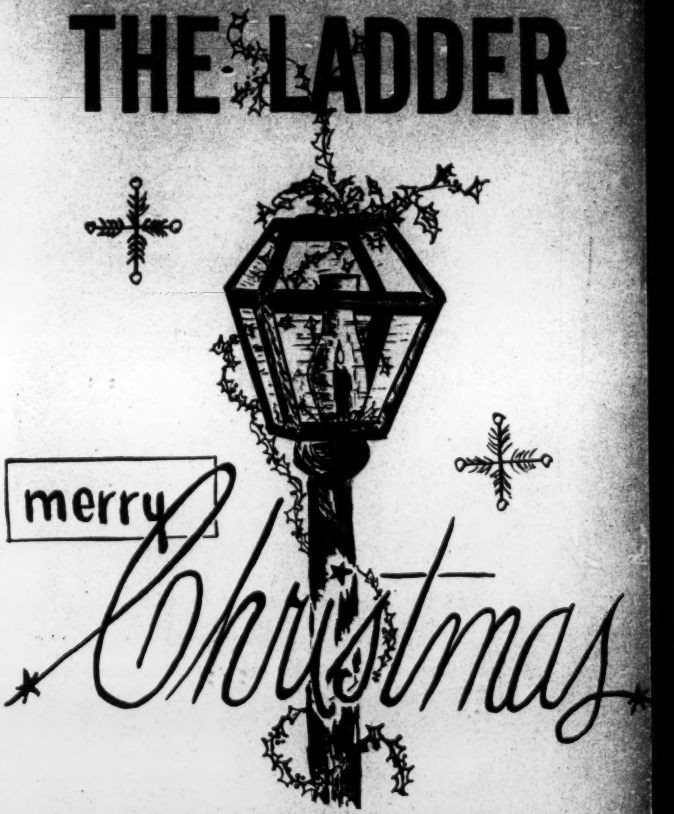
THE LADDER



DECEMBER, 1958

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purpose of the

Daughters of BILITIS

A WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROMOTING THE INTEGRATION OF THE HOMOSEXUAL INTO SOCIETY BY:

1. Education of the variant, with particular emphasis on the psychological, physiological and sociological aspects, to enable her to understand herself and make her adjustment to society in all its social, civic and economic implications—this to be accomplished by establishing and maintaining as complete a library as possible of both fiction and non-fiction literature on the sex deviant theme; by sponsoring public discussions on pertinent subjects to be conducted by leading members of the legal, psychiatric, religious and other professions; by advocating a mode of behavior and dress acceptable to society.

2. Education of the public at large through acceptance first of the individual, leading to an eventual breakdown of erroneous taboos and prejudices; through public discussion meetings aforementioned; through dissemination of educational literature on the homosexual theme.

3. Participation in research projects by duly authorized and responsible psychologists, sociologists and other such experts directed towards further knowledge of the homosexual.

4. Investigation of the penal code as it pertains to the homosexual, proposal of changes to provide an equitable handling of cases involving this minority group, and promotion of these changes through due process of law in the state legislatures.

the Ladder

DECEMBER 1958
VOLUME 3, NUMBER 3

Published monthly by the Daughters of Bilitis, Inc., a non-profit corporation, 165 O'Farrell Street, Room 405, San Francisco 2, California. Telephone YUkon 2-9290.

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THE LADDER is regarded as a sounding board for various points of view on the homophile and related subjects and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the organization.

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COVER BY HELEN SANDERS

A Christmas Story

I daresay some of you would consider me a sentimental slob. Perhaps I am when it comes to Christmas. For Christmas to me is a time of merriment and good will - of mistletoe and holly and Santa Claus!

The following story by Del Martin is reprinted from the December, 1956, issue of THE LADDER. The reason for rerunning the story is not for its particular literary merit, as the author will attest. But it is typical of the situation many Lesbians find themselves in at Holiday time - and after all, it is A CHRISTMAS STORY! --Editor.

* * *

"There, that does it."

The handmade gold star glittered from the top of the tree. Charlie clattered down from the chair. Sue snapped the switch.

The two girls stood back, arm in arm, to admire their first Christmas tree.

"It's beautiful," Sue murmured.

Charlie gave her a quick squeeze. She reached for a tiny package on the mantle and placed it on a lower limb of the tree.

"It may be small in size, but not in sentiment."

"How sweet of you, honey! What is it? When can I open it?"

With Sue this year Christmas would be like the ones she remembered as a child, Charlie thought. It had been years since she'd been at all excited about the holidays. They had been to her something to endure rather than enjoy. But Sue's enthusiasm and child-like anticipation were effervescent and Charlie was actually becoming a reformed Scrooge.

"I don't know. When do you think we should open our presents?" Charlie grinned.

"We always open them on Christmas morning at home - before breakfast," Sue said.

"Well, I guess we should have our own Christmas here the night before."

"But I'm expected at my folks' on Christmas Eve," Sue exclaimed. "My sister and her husband are going to Berkeley for Christmas dinner, so the only time we can get together is Christmas Eve."

Charlie's high spirits curdled into a hard lump in the pit of her stomach. She sighed, "I had thought we'd have Christmas Eve to ourselves and then go to our respective parents' on Christmas Day."

"But gosh, Charlie, it wouldn't be Christmas without the whole family being together."

"Well, you will be on Christmas Eve, so why can't we have Christmas morning together?"

"Because Christmas breakfast is a tradition with our family. Mother'd flip her lid if I wasn't there. As a matter of fact, she will probably want me to spend the night."

Charlie slumped into the overstuffed chair, "Families! What about our family? You and me! Don't we count?"

Sue perched on the arm of the chair and ruffled the wave in Charlie's hair. "Let's not get into a huff. We'll work it out some way -- really, darling."

For the five days until Christmas Eve, Charlie thought, brooded and plotted to no avail. She simply couldn't resolve the situation. She wanted to spend Christmas with Sue, but there were the two families, each with its own demands. What she wanted had little to do with what would be. Sue just accepted things as if it didn't matter. And Charlie was beginning to think that perhaps it didn't really matter.

As she left the office amid the well wishing, she muttered to herself, "Merry Christmas indeed! I wish I were a bear and could go into hibernation until the blamed thing is over and done with."

When she arrived at the apartment she found it empty. The unlighted tree looked as dismal as Charlie felt. She walked past it to the kitchen and poured herself a shot.

The phone rang and Charlie begrudgingly sauntered back to the living room to answer it.

"Merry Christmas!" said the voice on the other end of the line.

Charlie stuffed the words back through the mouth piece automatically.

"You don't sound very merry, Charlotte." It was Sue's mother.

"Guess I'm a little tired, but after a bit of Christmas spirits, I'll probably brighten up," Charlie replied.

"I'm sure you will, dear. Are you going to be with your family tonight?"

"No, we'll all be getting together tomorrow. I'm expecting some friends later this evening," Charlie answered.

"That's good. I think Christmas is especially the time when all our loved ones should be together. Is Sue there?"

"No, she hasn't come home from work yet."

"Our plans have been somewhat changed. Nancy and her husband won't be able to make it tonight."

"Oh?"

"Jim is having car trouble and he insists it will be too late by the time he gets the car fixed to bring the children. Even on Christmas Eve, he doesn't believe in relaxing the children's bedtime."

Gee, that's too bad, Mrs. Geary. They're going to Jim's folks tomorrow, aren't they?"

"Yes, but Nancy promised they'd come here for breakfast in the morning and it will really be Christmas as usual at the Geary's. Tonight, though, since the kids aren't coming, we thought we'd accept the Neman's invitation. That is, if it is all right with Sue. I'm not sure if she'd like to go."

"Why don't you go ahead, Mrs. Geary, and let Sue stay here and help me entertain tonight? Really,-- I need some help. And I'll see to it that she gets over there whatever time you say in the morning."

"If Sue would like to, Charlotte. Whatever she wants to do is fine. Have her call me when she gets home."

"Will do, And Merry Christmas! Charlie shouted into the phone.

SUNDAY MORNING

One Sunday morning I saw them approach, eight of them: chic, tailored, neat as a pin. They mounted the cable car, each in sandal-shoes, ivy-league shirt and roll-top crew socks. Eight keychains dangled from their pockets and each sported a diamond-studded gruen watch.

"These women!" Bobbie mumbled. "Such slaves to every fad and fashion. Dig that, everyone's wearing a chemise."

"Not us - wouldn't be caught dead in one."

"Me neither. I buy what I like. I'm an individualist."

"Yeah. That's one thing I like about our group. We just aren't taken in, ha! ha!"

And they jumped off, headed the way towards North-Bay. As chic and trim, and homogeneous, an octette as one would ever see.

-Bonnie Dureen

Radclyffe Hall

RADCLYFFE HALL WAS BORN AT BOURNEMOUTH, HANTS, ENGLAND, IN 1886, THE ONLY DAUGHTER OF RADCLYFFE RADCLYFFE-HALL. SHE WAS RAISED AS A BOY AND THOUGH CHRISTENED MARGUERITE RADCLYFFE-HALL HER TRUE FIRST NAME WAS NEVER USED EVEN AS A YOUNG CHILD. HER FIRST LITERARY VENTURE WAS AT THE AGE OF THREE WHEN SHE DICTATED A POEM.

HER FORMAL EDUCATION WAS ACCOMPLISHED AT KING'S COLLEGE IN LONDON, AND IN GERMANY. BETWEEN 1906 AND 1915 SHE PUBLISHED FIVE VOLUMES OF POETRY ALL OF WHICH HAVE A REMARKABLE SINGING LYRIC QUALITY. VARIOUS CONTEMPORARY COMPOSERS OF THE EARLY PART OF THIS CENTURY SET HER POETRY TO MUSIC; NOTABLY, CONINGSBY CLARKE WHO DID THE NOW FAMOUS BLIND PLOUGHMAN. DURING THIS SAME PERIOD MISS HALL HAD NUMEROUS SHORT STORIES PUBLISHED IN VARIOUS ENGLISH LITERARY MAGAZINES. THOSE THAT HAVE BEEN AVAILABLE TO THIS AUTHOR WERE NOT APPARENTLY PERTINENT TO THE STUDENT OF LESBIAN LITERATURE.

WILLIAM HEINEMANN BECAME INTERESTED IN HER WORK AND ENCOURAGED HER TO TRY A NOVEL. IN 1924, AFTER A LAPSE OF NINE YEARS, MISS HALL BROUGHT OUT THE UNLIT LAMP, HER FIRST NOVEL AND HER FIRST PUBLIC INTEREST IN LESBIANISM, MUTED IN TONE BUT APPARENT EVEN TO THE CASUAL EYE, AND ALSO FLELISHED THE FORGE.

IN 1925 SHE PUBLISHED A LIGHT PIECE OF HUMOROUS NONSENSE ENTITLED A SATURDAY LIFE. IN THE HANDS OF A LESS TALENTED WRITER THE LATTER WORK WOULD HAVE BEEN A FARCE.

THE NEXT FEW YEARS BROUGHT FAME AND GLORY. IN 1926 ADAM'S BREED, THE STORY OF A FRUSTRATED ITALIAN POET TURNED RESTAURANT KEEPER, WON THE COVETED FEMINA-VIE HEUREUSE PRIZE AND THE JAMES TAIT BLACK MEMORIAL BOOK PRIZE. LATER, IN 1930, THIS SAME NOVEL WON THE GOLD MEDAL OF THE EICHELBERGHER HUMANE AWARD.

BETWEEN 1926 AND 1930, HOWEVER, MUCH OF MISS HALL'S LIFE CHANGED. AGAINST THE ADVICE OF FRIENDS SHE PUBLISHED THE WELL OF LONELINESS IN 1928 AND BROUGHT A STORM OF CONTROVERSY INTO THE PUBLISHING WORLD THAT HAS NEVER BEEN EQUALLED BEFORE OR SINCE. A LONDON MAGISTRATE, SIR CHARTRES BIRON, RULED THAT EVEN THOUGH THE BOOK WAS DIGNIFIED AND RESTRAINED IN MANNER, IT PRESENTED AN APPEAL FOR THE RECOGNITION BY "DECENT PEOPLE" THAT SEXUAL INVERSION EXISTS AND IS NOT THE

FAULT OF THE PERSON WHO SUFFERS FROM IT; THEREFORE, HE JUDGED THE BOOK AN OBSCENE LIBEL AND ORDERED ALL COPIES OF IT DESTROYED.

VICTORY IN AMERICA

ON THE HEELS OF THIS ACTION, JOHN S. SUMNER, OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF VICE, PROMPTLY FOLLOWED SUIT, BUT MET WITH A SUDDEN REVERSE WHEN AN AMERICAN COURT DISAGREED WITH THE ENGLISH VERDICT. A BEAUTIFULLY BOUND, NUMBERED, LIMITED AND AUTOGRAPHED TWO-VOLUME EDITION OF THE WELL OF LONELINESS WAS PUBLISHED CELEBRATING THIS VICTORY. THIS NOW PRICELESS COLLECTOR'S ITEM WAS CALLED THE VICTORY EDITION.

ONLY ONCE AGAIN DID MISS HALL ADD TO THE LITERATURE OF LESBIANA WHEN IN 1934 SHE PUBLISHED A VOLUME OF SHORT STORIES, MISS OGILVY FINDS HERSELF. A COUPLE OF THE PIECES IN THIS COLLECTION FORESHADOW THE EARLIER CONTROVERIAL NOVEL.

IT IS POPULAR CONJECTURE THAT MISS HALL WAS THE LIVING, BREATHING MODEL OF STEPHEN GORDON, AND THERE IS MUCH EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT THAT THEORY. MISS HALL WINTERED IN PARIS AND AT A VILLA IN NORTHERN ITALY, AND SUMMERED IN RYE, SUSSEX. EACH OF THESE THREE HOMES APPEAR AS THE HOMES OF STEPHEN GORDON, HER LITERARY HEROINE.

ONE GLANCE AT THE SEVERELY TAILORED GRAY SUIT, WHITE SHIRT, AND MAN'S TIE WHICH SHE AFFECTED IN ENGLISH SOCIETY, OR THE EVEN MORE SEVERE PANTS, BOOTS, WHITE OPEN-NECKED SHIRTS AND BERETS SHE OFTEN WORE IN PARIS, WILL SHOW THAT SHE USED HER OWN TASTE IN APPAREL AS A MODEL FOR STEPHEN GORDON. THIS IS PARTICULARY APPARENT WHEN ONE CONSIDERS THAT IN FRANCE ONLY MEN WORE BERETS. IN DEDICATING THE BOOK TO "OUR THREE SELVES" SHE INCLUDES HERSELF IN THE LESBIAN WORLD.

SOME OF THE LAST YEARS OF HER LIFE WERE SPENT IN PARIS, WHERE HER CLOSEST FRIENDS WERE DJUNA BARNES, AUTHORESS OF NIGHTWOOD, AND ANAIS NIN, WHO HAS CONTRIBUTED AT LEAST TWO WORKS OF VARIANT SIGNIFICANCE TO THE WORLD. SHE DIED IN LONDON, ON OCTOBER 7, 1943, AFTER A SIX MONTH ILLNESS. HER LAST NOVEL, UNTITLED AND PURPORTEDLY LESBIAN IN THEME, WAS DESTROYED AT HER REQUEST JUST BEFORE SHE DIED. EVEN THE STAID LONDON TIMES HAD VERY KIND WORDS TO SAY ABOUT HER NOW CLASSIC, MANY TIMES REPRINTED THE WELL OF LONELINESS.

- GENE DAMON

LESBIANA

77. CHILD IN THE DARK BY ROSEMARY TIMPERLEY. CROWELL, 1956.

THREE NOVELETTES ALL BASED ON A THEME OF FANTASY AND TERROR IN CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE. TWO OF THE THREE INVOLVE A LESBIAN. ONE OF THESE IS OVERT. THIS CONCERNS THE EVIL INFLUENCE A NOW DEAD TEACHER EXERCISES OVER HER FORMER PUPILS, ALL FEMALE.

78. CHILDREN OF THE STONE LIONS BY PAUL HACKETT. PUTNAM, 1955.

THE HERO MARRIES A GIRL HE HAS IMPREGNATED AND FOR A BRIEF PERIOD THEY ARE HAPPY TOGETHER. EXTERNAL PRESSURES SUCH AS JOB, MONEY, ETC., DRIVE THEM APART. THE APPEARANCE OF JACKIE, A VERY MASCULINE WOMAN FROM THE WIFE'S PAST, SENDS THEM INTO A DOWNWARD SPIRAL WHICH ENDS WITH THE WIFE'S SUICIDE. THE ODD PART IS THAT THE HUSBAND CLAIMS HE HAS MURDERED HIS WIFE IN ORDER TO EXONERATE JACKIE, HIS LESBIAN RIVAL. ALSO UNUSUAL IN THIS TYPE OF STORY IS THAT JACKIE IS PRESENTED AS THE ONLY MORAL AND UPRIGHT MEMBER OF THE CAST.

79. THE RED ROOM BY FRANCOIS MALLET-JORIS. FARRAR, STRAUSS & CUDAHY, 1956.

SEQUEL TO "THE ILLUSIONIST". A DISILLUSIONED HELENE SEEKS VENGEANCE ON HER STEPMOTHER AND FORMER LOVER BY ENTICING AWAY THE LATTER'S PARAMOUR. TRAPPED IN A RED ROOM OF GARISH HORROR, HERS IS THE TRAGEDY OF A BITTER AND HARDENED SOUL.

85. ANNETTE AND SYLVIE BY ROMAIN ROLLAND. HENRY HOLT & CO., 1925.

THE FIRST VOLUME OF "THE SOUL ENCHANTED", TELLING THE INTRIGUING STORY OF AFFECTION BETWEEN TWO HALF SISTERS WHO HAD NEVER SEEN EACH OTHER UNTIL NOW. ARISING IN A FULL SPONTANIETY OF ADOLESCENT INNOCENCE, IT RISES IN A TOWERING PASSION OBSCURING ALL OTHER CASUAL AND PASSING EVENTS.

a review

Sappho of Lesbos

By Arthur Weigall. Garden City Publishing Company, Inc., 1932

So little is known about Sappho, but there is so much we would like to know. The bare facts remain: born in Lesbos some time in the Seventh century B.C.; exiled to Sicily by the tyrant Pittakos, where she married Kercolas and was widowed shortly after, and then returned to the island where she opened a school of music and dance for young girls. Even the circumstances of her death remain shadowy due to confusion of names wherein another Sappho, a courtesan, leaped from the Leucadian cliffs for the unrequited love of Phaon.

Lesbos! The very name elicits visions of surpassing beauty: old gnarled olive groves creeping down to the seas, small streams and "fairy-like glens among boulders covered with maiden-hair fern". One may even conjur shades of slender maidens dancing wild and bright-haired to the weird flute-tones ebbing on a cold night's air. Almost alone among Greek communities, Lesbos enjoyed a freedom for women, shared only by the military state of Sparta. The general inference is that Lesbian women were about as free as Western women of today. As late as 1847, the traveler Skene reported that Lesbian women "were extremely masculine, inheriting all landed property, and being managers of all family affairs...And in fact, they used to go out to work, or to hunt on horseback, while the men sat home to spin." How far a departure this was from the oriental exclusion of women practiced elsewhere on the mainland of Greece!

Upon the return of Sappho from her Sicilian exile, she immediately started a school of arts for aristocratic young maidens. Poetry, music and dance made up the curriculum, which sooner or later attracted daughters of the best families of Greece. Among these were the frail delicate Gyriino,

Gongyla and Kydro. And also the surpassing Knasidika of whom Sappho wrote:

> "But you Dika, plait with your delicate
> fingers a wreath of anise to place upon
> your lovely hair."

And Atthis:

> "I loved you, Atthis, long ago, when my
> own girlhood was still all flowers, and
> you seemed to me an awkward little child."

With the sweet came the bitter, when love she said was:

> "A weaver of fictions...a bringer of pain...
> As for me, love has shaken my mind as a down-
> rushing wind that falls upon the oak trees...
> Yet (love) is the beloved offspring of Earth
> and Heaven."

From then on, Sappho's life is lost in obscurity. Even her poetry has scarcely survived-the bulk of it being destroyed by fanatics in the early Christian era. Slowly and painstakingly scholars have pieced together the remaining fragments of her poems, from quotations by other authors, or scraps that miraculously escaped the conflagration. And these we may now read: with grief that so much has been lost, and with wonder that some of its beauty remains for our enjoyment.

- Barbara Stephens

GEMS FROM SAPPHO

I render your beauty the sacrifice of all my thoughts, and worship you with all my senses.

Nor ever did the gathering sounds of early spring fill any wood with the chorus of the nightingale but you wandered thither with me.

Love can make a poet out of a boor.

More delicate than water...
Daintier than rosebuds -
To fold you in my arms, my beloved.

The moon has set and the Pleiades (are gone). It is midnight. Time passes; and yet I lie alone.

Thus of old, the dainty feet of Cretan girls used to dance in time with the music beside some beautiful altar, treading upon the smooth soft sheen of the grass.

Hither now, tender Graces and lovely Muses,
Rose-armed, pure Graces, come higher, daughters of Zeus.

IT WILL APPEAR - PROBABLY

So many of you have answered our pleas for manuscripts that we are overwhelmed. We don't have too many - that will never happen. But we do have more than we can use in one issue - or even two or three. If we haven't acknowledged receipt of your manuscript - and we haven't - it doesn't mean we aren't going to use it. It means either that we haven't read it or that we're going to use it but haven't had space yet. If we're not going to use it we will eventually send it back.

We are very grateful for all the material that is sent in. Please keep sending it. It is <u>you</u> who are making THE LADDER the representative magazine of the Lesbian. No small group of people can do that - it has to be done by the differing opinions and points of view of many.

- Phyllis Lyon, Editor

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5 - GAB 'N JAVA AT 2217 FILLMORE ST., 8 P.M. INFORMAL DISCUSSION SESSION FOR WOMEN ONLY.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6 - PUBLICATIONS WORKSHOP CONDUCTED BY THE PUBLICATIONS DEPARTMENT OF THE MATTACHINE SOCIETY. $5.00 COVERS THE ENTIRE PROGRAM INCLUDING THE BANQUET. THE PROGRAM STARTS AT 1 P.M. AND WILL CONTINUE UNTIL 4:30 P.M. FEATURING MEMBERS OF THE LADDER, ONE MAGAZINE, THE MATTACHINE REVIEW AND SEX & CENSORSHIP MAGAZINE. REGISTRATION SHOULD BE MADE BY DECEMBER 2 TO THE MATTACHINE SOCIETY, INC., ROOM 309, 693 MISSION ST., SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7 - THE NEW YORK CHAPTER OF THE DOB WILL MEET PROMPTLY AT 2:30 P.M. IN ROOM 409, 1133 BROADWAY. NOTE THAT THIS IS A NEW ADDRESS. ALL WOMEN OVER 21 ARE INVITED TO ATTEND.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10 - DOB BUSINESS MEETING. 8 P.M. 2173 AT CALIFORNIA ST., SAN FRANCISCO, BASEMENT APARTMENT.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 31 - NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY FOR DOB MEMBERS ONLY. PLEASE CONTACT THE OFFICE OR ONE OF THE OFFICERS BY MONDAY, DECEMBER 29 TO MAKE YOUR RESERVATION.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 10 - LADDER WORK PARTY. START THE NEW YEAR RIGHT BY HELPING ASSEMBLE AND MAIL THE LADDER. FROM NOON ON AT THE DOB OFFICES.

JANUARY 30-FEBRUARY 1 - ONE'S ANNUAL MIDWINTER INSTITUE IN LOS ANGELES. THIS EVENT IS ALWAYS STIMULATING AND CHALLENGING. MAKE YOUR PLANS NOW TO ATTEND. FURTHER DETAILS IN THE JANUARY ISSUE OF THE LADDER.

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DOB NOW HAS CHAPTERS IN NEW YORK AND RHODE ISLAND. IN NEW YORK THE ADDRESS IS 1133 BROADWAY, ROOM 409. IN RHODE ISLAND WRITE TO P.O. BOX 14, WEST WARWICK. WOMEN IN THESE AREAS ARE URGED TO CONTACT THE NEW CHAPTERS - THEY CAN USE YOUR SUPPORT.

READERS RESPOND

"I RECOMMEND A CAREFUL READING OF THE HOLY BIBLE FROM THE PESHITTA, BY GEORGE M. LAMSA, BECAUSE IT IS A DIRECT TRANSLATION FROM THE ARAMAIC, THE LANGUAGE THAT JESUS SPOKE, BY A SCHOLAR WHOSE NATIVE TONGUE IS ARAMAIC AND WHO ALSO SPEAKS ENGLISH FLUENTLY. IT CONTAINS SEVERAL CORRECTIONS OF ERRORS PERPETUATED IN OTHER TRANSLATIONS; FOR EXAMPLE, THE FOLLOWING PASSAGE IS OF GREAT SIGNIFICANCE TO THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN PERSECUTED FOR THEIR DEEP LOVE FOR FRIENDS OR ATTRIBUTES TYPICAL OF THE OPPOSITE SEX: '...AND WHOEVER SAYS TO HIS BROTHER, YOU ARE EFFEMINATE, IS CONDEMNED TO HELL FIRE.' (DIRECT QUOTATION FROM JESUS, IN MATTHEW 5:22).

"THERE ARE OTHER PASSAGES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT IN WHICH JESUS MAKES DIRECT REFERENCE TO BROTHERLY LOVE IN A VERY CLEAR AND DEFINITE MANNER, SUCH AS THE FOLLOWING: 'THERE IS NO GREATER LOVE THAN THIS, THAT A MAN LAY DOWN HIS LIFE FOR THE SAKE OF HIS FRIENDS.' (JOHN 15:13)

"ALSO, IN MATTHEW 19:10-12, JESUS IS QUOTED AS SAYING, WHEN THE APOSTLES REMARKED THAT IT MIGHT BE BETTER NOT TO MARRY: 'THIS SAYING DOES NOT APPLY TO EVERY MAN, BUT TO WHOM IT IS GIVEN. FOR THERE ARE EUNUCHS WHO WERE BORN SO FROM THEIR MOTHER'S WOMB; AND THERE ARE EUNUCHS WHO WERE MADE EUNUCHS BY MAN; AND THERE ARE EUNUCHS WHO MADE THEMSELVES FOR THE SAKE OF THE KINDOM OF HEAVEN. TO HIM WHO CAN COMPREHEND, THIS IS ENOUGH.'

"IN ADDITION, GEORGE LAMSA WROTE SEVERAL OTHER BOOKS CLARIFYING THE BIBLE. ONE VERY SIGNIFICANT VOLUME IS 'MY NEIGHBOR, JESUS', IN WHICH LAMSA EXPLAINS THE CUSTOMS AND COLLOQUIALISMS OF HIS COUNTRYMEN IN A MANNER THAT THROWS LIGHT ON SEVERAL OF THE STATE-

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MENTS OF JESUS. EXAMPLE: WHEN ONE OF ARAMAIC NATIONALITY SAYS 'I HAVE EATEN MY BODY AND DRUNK MY BLOOD' HE MEANS 'I HAVE WORKED VERY HARD', OR AS WE WOULD SAY, 'I HAVE SWEATED BLOOD AND TEARS.'

"I URGE EVERYONE WHO IS SUBJECT TO PERSECUTION OR OSTRACISM BECAUSE OF A DEEP LOVE FOR A FRIEND TO KEEP ON HAND THE LAMSA VERSION OF THE BIBLE, AND TO MAKE A LIST OF ALL PERTINENT PASSAGES TO SHOW TO CRITICS."

C.V., PASADENA, CALIF.

* * * * *

"SINCE I DID NOT MAKE ANY NOTES OF MY ADDRESS IN NEW YORK AND, FOR ONE REASON OR ANOTHER, IT WAS NOT TAPED, I AM GRATEFUL FOR THE RESUME IN THE RECENT EDITION, AND I WANT TO CONGRATULATE YOU ON THE ENTIRE PUBLICATION.

"KINDLY USE THE ENCLOSED CHECK FOR 10.00 TO SEND SUBSCRIPTIONS TO PEOPLE WHO OUGHT TO READ THE PUBLICATION."

KENNETH C. ZWERIN, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.

* * * * *

"I WISH TO DISCUSS MODE OF DRESS, WHICH HAS RECENTLY BEEN A SUBJECT IN THE LADDER. I HAVE NEVER FELT THAT I FLAUNTED MY HOMOSEXUALITY FOR SEVERAL REASONS. I AM SIX FEET TALL, AND REGULAR FEMININE ATTIRE IS NOT MADE FOR THAT HEIGHT UNLESS YOU PATRONIZE THE SO-CALLED 'TALL GIRL SHOPS' WHOSE STYLES ARE NOT MINE, OR OTHERWISE HAVE YOUR CLOTHES TAILOR MADE. IN EITHER CASE, IT CAN BECOME A MIGHTY EXPENSIVE PROPOSITION TO CLOTHE ONESELF WHEN ONE IS NOT THAT CLOTHES CONSCIOUS, OR TRY TO KEEP UP WITH THE 'JONES'. I DO WEAR MEN'S SLACKS, BUT MEN'S SHIRTS HAVE LONGER TAILS AND SLEEVES, THUS THEY ARE MORE COMFORTABLE. IT IS NOT WHAT YOU ARE WEARING THAT COUNTS, IT IS HOW YOU CONDUCT YOURSELF THAT MATTERS."

S.K., NORTH LAS VEGAS, NEV.

* * * * *

"SEVERAL WEEKS AGO I WROTE TO YOU ASKING ABOUT DOB; AND I RECEIVED A VERY NICE REPLY AND, SO FAR, TWO COPIES OF THE LADDER. I WOULD LIKE NOTHING BETTER THAN TO SEE THE LADDER BECOME A

HIGH CLASS, INTERESTING, GOOD MAGAZINE. HOWEVER, I BELIEVE THAT THE MAGAZINE WILL HAVE TO ASSUME A MUCH MORE PROFESSIONAL STANDARD BEFORE WE ARE GOING TO IMPRESS ANYBODY WITH IT.

"YOU KNOW, I'M A REAL CRUSADER FOR OUR CAUSE AND I AM TRULY INTERESTED. I AM WRITING A NOVEL, AT THE PRESENT TIME, WHICH WILL HELP OUR CAUSE ALONG CONSIDERABLY, IF I CAN GET IT PUBLISHED. MANY PEOPLE HAVE SAID, AND IT IS ALL TOO TRUE, THAT HOMOSEXUAL NOVELS, STORIES AND POETRY ARE VERY, VERY BAD: I HAVE GIVEN THIS A LOT OF THOUGHT AND THINK IT IS MAINLY BECAUSE, FIRST OF ALL, HOMOSEXUAL WRITING IS STILL IN ITS INFANCY. GOOD, PROFESSIONAL WRITERS (UNLESS THEY ARE CRUSADERS) ARE AFRAID TO TACKLE THE FIELD BECAUSE IT WOULD BRAND THEM IN THE EYES OF THE PUBLIC. HOMOSEXUAL WRITERS ACCENTUATE THE HOMO, AS WELL AS THE SEXUAL PART OF THE STORY TOO MUCH. THERE ARE OTHER THINGS IN THE WORLD. TO ME, THE HOMOSEXUAL PART OF A PERSON IS DEEPLY INGRAINED IN HIM; BUT HE DOES OTHER THINGS. HE EATS BREAKFAST THE SAME AS ANYONE ELSE; HE RIDES TO WORK ON THE SUBWAY; HE LAUGHS AT JOKES; HE CRIES AT TRAGEDY. INSTEAD OF ACCENTUATING THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN US AND THE HETEROSEXUAL WORLD, WHY DOESN'T THE WRITER OF GAY BOOKS BRING OUT SOME OF THE SIMILARITIES? WE'RE NOT FREAKS, AS YOU WELL KNOW."

J.W., BROOKLYN, N.Y.

* * * * *

"HOORAY FOR THE LADDER! YOU ARE DOING A WONDERFUL JOB FOR US - KEEP IT UP.

S.T., SAN DIEGO, CALIF.

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BRITAIN LIFTS BAN ON HOMOSEXUAL PLAYS

THE LORD CHAMBERLAIN, ARBITER OF WHAT MAY BE PRODUCED ON THE BRITISH STAGE, ANNOUNCED RECENTLY THAT HE HAS LIFTED THE BAN ON PLAYS DEALING WITH HOMOSEXUALITY.

"THIS SUBJECT IS NOW SO WIDELY DEBATED, WRITTEN ABOUT AND TALKED OF THAT ITS COMPLETE EXCLUSION FROM THE STAGE CAN NO LONGER BE JUSTIFIABLE," HE SAID IN A LETTER TO THE THEATER MANAGER'S NATIONAL BODY.

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THE LADDER: A monthly publication by the DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS, INC., mailed by first class mail in a plain sealed envelope for $2.50 per year.

CONTRIBUTIONS are gratefully accepted from anyone who wishes to assist us in our work. We are a non-profit corporation working entirely on donated labor. Our fees are not of such amounts as to allow for much expansion of the publication. While men may not become members of the DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS, INC., many have expressed interest in our efforts and our publication and have made contributions to further our work. Of course, anyone over 21 years of age may subscribe to THE LADDER.

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